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The manuscript of Burns's poem, "To Mary in Heaven," was recently sold at auction at Sotheby's in London for \$760, and that of "Rab and His Friends" for \$200.

A genuine fourth edition copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," with the rare portrait of Bunyan dreaming, by R. White, was bought on American orders for \$505. Three volumes of the "Pennsylvania Tracts" brought \$102.50.

The fourth edition of "The Pilgrim's Progress" is so rare that the sale of only one other copy in recent years can be traced. That one, which was without the portrait and was otherwise defective, brought \$60 in 1894. The portrait is interesting, too, because, the book having been pirated, the publisher of the fourth edition put on the back of the portrait this notice: "The fourth edition hath, as the third had, the author's picture before the title, and hath more than twenty-two passages of additions, pertinently placed quite through the Book, which the counterfeit hath not."

#### FAKES FOR COLLECTORS.

A well-authenticated story is told of a London art-dealer, who on a visit to Rome became acquainted with an American tourist, whom he showed various attentions with an eye to business. One morning crossing one of the public squares the dealer told his victim a glib story of being able to have one of the antique statues standing there removed, and after some parleying he sold this statue to the rich Westerner for a very large sum, with the promise to ship it to the States. Shortly after the gentleman's arrival home he received a large box containing a statue, to all appearances the same which he had seen on the Roman plaza. This was, of course, an exact duplicate, doctored to resemble the original in antique appearance and copied to order by some clever Italian sculptor. The wealthy miner still imagines himself the proud owner of a unique example of ancient sculpture—until on a

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future visit to the "Eternal City" he sees the old original still standing in its wonted place.

This is a fair sample of the manner in which the present collecting craze for the antique and curios has generated an army of frauds and fakirs. The rage for collecting has grown steadily these later years, and the appalling manner in which this demand is being supplied by carloads and carloads of foreign and domestic imitations points plain to the extensive, thriving trade in brumagem, worthless rubbish of the counterfeiters.

There is no limit apparent to the frauds perpetrated. We know of the Brussels factory of "Old Masters." Hundreds of the so-called Barbizon pictures hanging in American homes were painted in New York. It is not so long ago that the present Prince of Wales came across what he considered a fine picture by Corot in Paris. He consulted four London experts, and upon their advice that it was genuine and a finely-executed work of art, the Prince purchased it and presented it to the Dublin Gallery of Modern Art. A Frenchman who visited the gallery soon after the picture was hung recognized it as a poor copy of a painting by Mesgoly, the original of which is now in a Budapest Museum. The auction rooms of all large cities are filled with the rankest imitations and counterfeits of pictorial art.

The demand for antique furniture has offered one of the widest fields for the skilful artisan to imitate marquetry, buhlwork, Chippendale, old French desks or Dutch or colonial pieces. How many old clocks—grandfather's clocks, with sleepy old brass face and lazy pendulum, have come from Holland, or rather did not come.

Of the antique brass fraud there is no end—brasses of the ancient memorial types, colonial candlesticks, plaques of Flemish pattern, old Sheraton brass fenders with claw feet, Russian Samovars, Dutch "doofpotten," the copper boxes in which the burning peat is smothered, and even tiny incense-burners of intricate design from Hindoo palaces. The process of making decorative brasses is simple in the extreme, demanding only a certain artistic ability, combined with a dash of mechanical sense. The sheets of brass can be purchased, all ready for use, from any of the foundries at a small cost. The article is manufactured by molding or stamping, and the finish given by acids and other methods stamps upon the object the halo of centuries.

Old cut-glass is produced to-day by machinery—the crystal appearance will in a few years give place, however, to a sickly greenish shade. A certain Paris maker

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of old English china is said to have made over half a million out of "imitation genuines." The Chelsea gold anchor is extensively imitated. None of the hall-marks of china plate count for anything, the condition of the glaze alone is a guide to the expert.

With antique jewelry the manufacture is more difficult and expensive, so there is not such an immense profit in this line of imitation. The siege of Peking was a godsend to the dealer in these bibelots, and many jade ornaments, disguised by clever tarnish on the gold mountings, have been sold for antique Chinese as the spoils of war. Turkish and Egyptian jewelry, Venetian beads and antique necklaces offer wider scope to the fraudulent dealer.

Much of the "Old" Sheffield plate is "dipped" copper, and it is not surprising that such immense quantities of so-called genuine "Sheffield" are year after year disposed of.

The ingenuity of the forger is unlimited. "Antique" armor is made in Birmingham. Tanagra figurines, Egyptian scarabees, Greek coins, antique terra-cottas, ancient weapons, Florentine Renaissance marbles—they are made in Rome, Munich, Paris, Antwerp and wherenot. The spurious print is a common trap. The demand for examples of the celebrated engravers of the eighteenth century exceeds the supply a hundred-fold, and the supply is furnished by a flood of reprints and reproductions, and much of the priceless work of Bartolozzi, Green, John Raphael Smith, Ward, Schiavonetti and Cipriani can be traced to modern hands.

If one should become bewildered by this array of counterfeits and become convinced of the fact that the most careful discrimination will not always serve to protect collectors against fraud, some thought should be given how to escape the toils of the forger or the fraudulent devices of shrewd and wily traders. A safe resort would be to eschew all "antiques." There is enough romance in collecting modern products of art to satisfy the most adventurous. How much greater satisfaction ought it to be to buy, instead of valueless rubbish, cheap work of young men, destined, perhaps, to become famous at some future day. At the moment there comes to mind some animal bronzes by a young sculptor which will rival those produced by Barye. It is not so very long ago that amateurs could buy for a few thousand francs the works of a young unknown Spaniard by the name of Fortuny, whose acknowledged masterpieces are now worth thousands of dollars. There

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is a man in Boston who, years ago, knew enough to buy Millet's drawings by the hundred for a paltry thousand francs—and was laughed at for his pains; but now one single drawing is worth what he paid for the lot. It is less than a generation ago when a little Neapolitan sculptor, Genito, tramped around Rome trying to sell his statuettes, representing Italian fishermen, for a few hundred francs. Yet, some time after, Meissonier characterized these as "little masterpieces worthy of the Renaissance," and to-day they occupy places in museums.

A safe resort for the amateur collector of the "antique," however, may be by confining his attention to those lines of production which cannot be imitated. Of course, what has been done once can be done again, but there are some things which have been done once that cannot be done again without costing more than they are worth. So the collector of fine laces may consider himself reasonably safe. The skill, time and patience required to make a lace that would pass as old Venetian or Point d'Alaçon could not be employed in the counterfeiting business at a profit. Laces can be and are copied by machinery, and such modern machine-made laces are very beautiful indeed, but they are sold as factory goods.

The same may be said of antique Oriental rugs, which are extensively imitated, but easily distinguished. The collector of ivory carvings may also rest assured that his treasures are unquestionably genuine, the material itself is rare and valuable and it requires the hand of an artist to execute the quaint and intricate designs which the Chinese carvers have wrought out with such amazing skill. Old tapestries, mediæval illuminated manuscripts and Renaissance embroideries are also among the productions of art which a collector can seek to acquire without much danger of being cheated.

Places to be evaded by the collector should be the auctions, in private houses especially, and most other auction places in general, unless he has the advice of some competent expert. Rarely the half of what is sold in these private-house auctions has been on the premises forty-eight hours before the sale takes place. Paintings, curiosities and bric-a-brac have been put in by the auctioneer out of his stock from his place downtown, on the avenue or one of the side streets. Generally these auctions are "stuffed."

Unless a person *knows*, he should in the pursuit of his hobby purchase only from reliable dealers who are willing to guarantee clearly what they sell, or if not willing to guarantee will say so.

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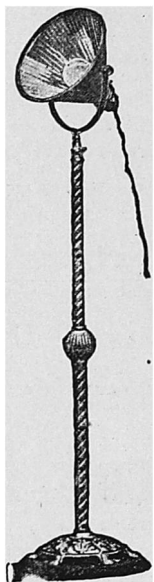
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